



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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COUNTY PROCLAIMS WEST NILE VIRUS AWARENESS WEEK *Citizens Encouraged to "Fight the Bite"*

In an effort to educate and empower residents to take action and protect themselves from West Nile virus (WNV), the County Board of Supervisors proclaimed April 25th through May 1st, 2005 to be West Nile Virus Awareness Week.

"We need County residents to eliminate standing water around their homes, which can become breeding areas for mosquitoes," said County Supervisor Greg Cox. "Due to the heavy rains this winter and the pools of standing water left behind, it will be a challenge to keep the mosquito population in check."

Residents should eliminate water from these common backyard breeding sources:

- Bird baths, ponds and poorly maintained swimming pools
- Sagging pool covers and tarps covering woodpiles, boats and RV's
- Children's toys, wading pools and tire swings
- Clogged rain gutters, uncovered garbage cans and wheelbarrows
- Dripping faucets, broken irrigation pipes and sprinkler heads
- Plant saucers, lawn ornaments and garden art
- Animal troughs and pets' water bowls
- Flat roofs, tool sheds and machinery

Although WNV has not been detected in the County so far this year, past testing has shown the virus is in the county. Surrounding counties have already identified positive dead birds, mosquitoes and chickens this year.

People can reduce the risk of acquiring WNV by eliminating breeding sources and staying inside when mosquitoes are most active. If you must be outside, wear DEET, long sleeves and pants, especially at dusk and dawn.

For more information on WNV, to report dead birds or mosquito breeding areas, or find out where to pick up free mosquito-eating fish, call 1-888-551-INFO (4636) or visit

www.SDFightTheBite.com

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